
september

A consortium of environmental organizations files suit in federal court against the Secretary of the Interior and the Director of the National Park Service challenging the legality of the April Black Canyon settlement agreement.

Director Mainella signs Director's Order 77-2 regarding the management of floodplains in parks, including development that could adversely affect natural resources and the functions of floodplains.

Judge William Hoeveler, the judge originally presiding over the settlement of the 1988 Everglades water quality lawsuit, is removed from the suit in response to a motion by the sugar industry concerning his remarks to the press and potential bias.

The National Park Service receives a settlement of \$132,000 for the restoration of 2,691 square feet (250 sq m) of sea grass damaged by a vessel grounding near Crane Key in Everglades National Park, Florida.

The Continental Divide Research Learning Center inaugurates its year-round residential campus at the historic McGraw Ranch in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado (see page 22).

The National Park Service and the Republic of Gabon in western Africa sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) recognizing their mutual interest in establishing and managing national parks and protected areas for the purpose of preservation, recreation, public education, and ecotourism. The National Park Service will provide technical assistance for park planning, general management and business plans, and possibly training in law enforcement, visitor services, and tourism. This MOU formalizes an opportunity for the National Park Service to assist in the preservation of the world's largest remaining tropical forest, which is five times larger than that of Costa Rica.

The report "Shoreline Trash: Studies at Padre Island National Seashore, 1989-1998" is released and documents the most extensive trash monitoring study of its type initiated in the United States. Results indicate that international regulations governing the dumping of plastics in the ocean have not reduced the amount of plastics that wash ashore at Padre Island National Seashore, Texas. The study also shows that the majority of the Padre Island trash originates from the Gulf of Mexico shrimp industry. Park staff have begun working with the shrimp industry to develop better technology, storage systems, and an education program to keep trash out of the Gulf of Mexico.